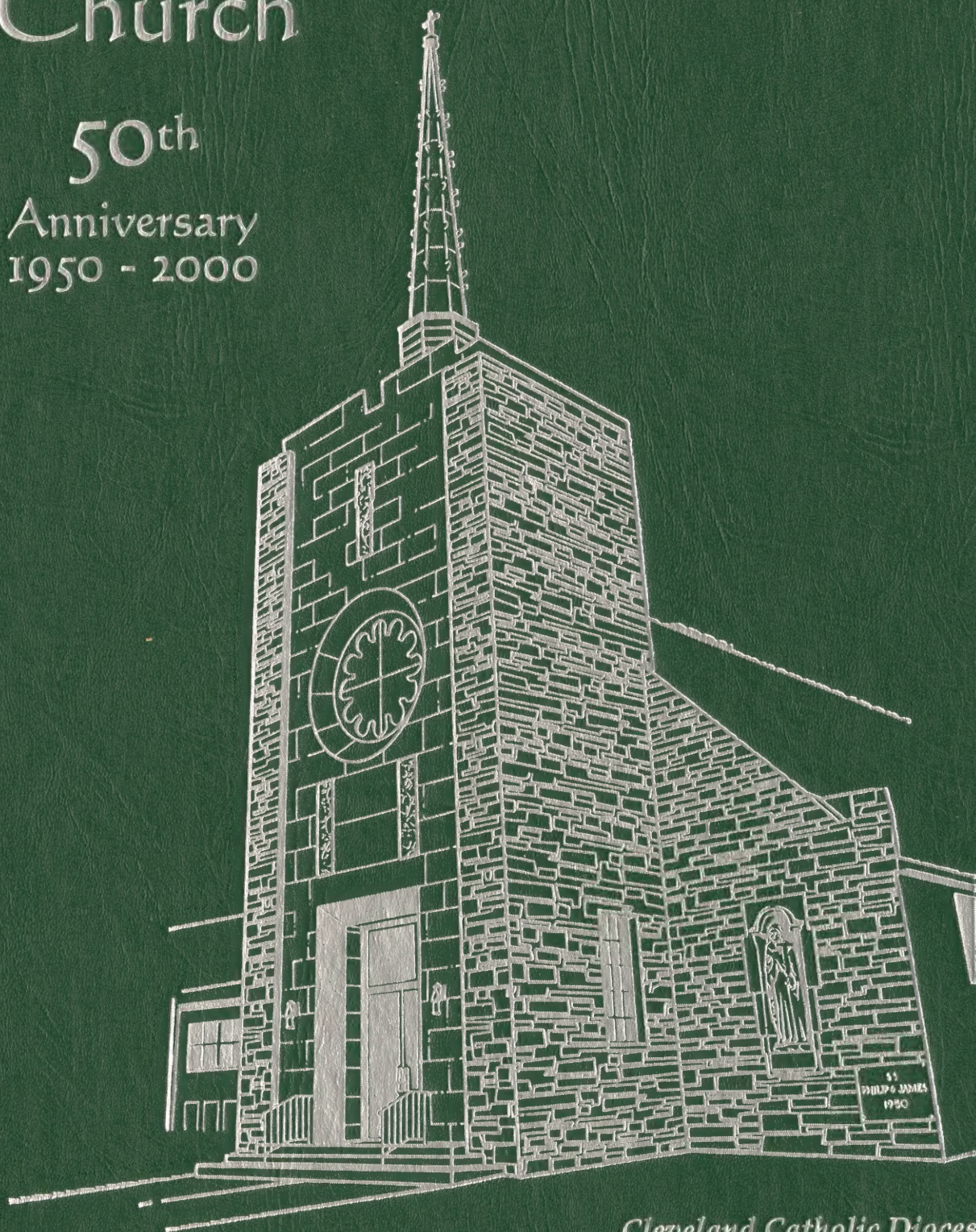


# Saints Philip & James Church

50<sup>th</sup>  
Anniversary  
1950 - 2000



*Cleveland Catholic Diocese  
Cleveland, Ohio*



62/104

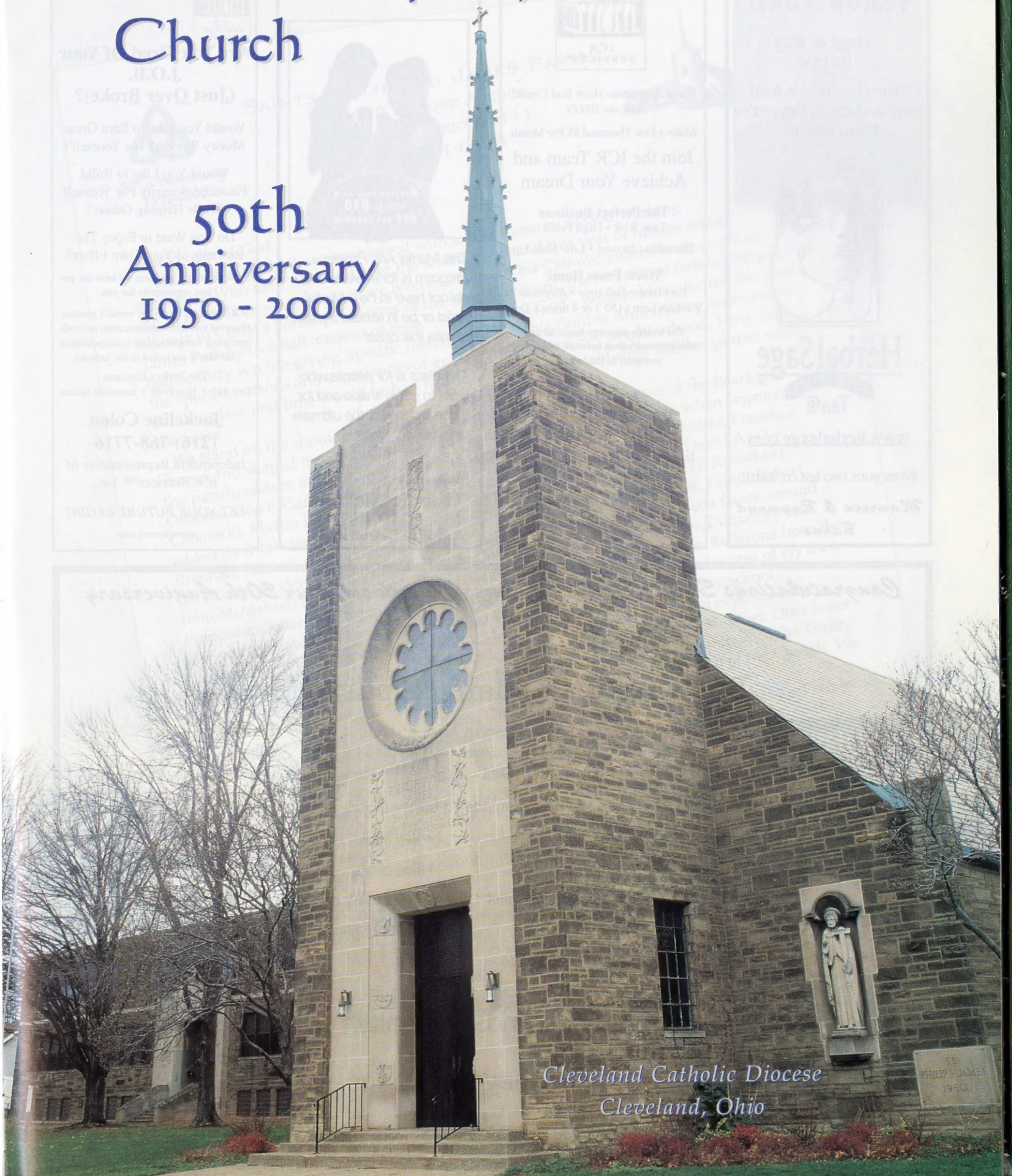






# Saints Philip & James Church

50th  
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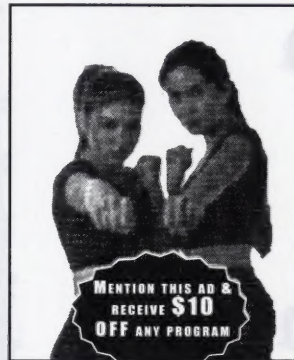
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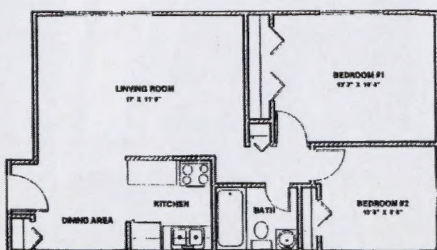
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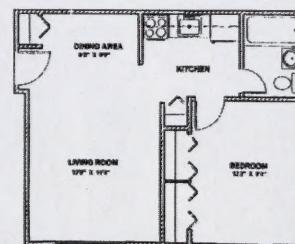
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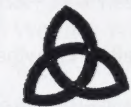
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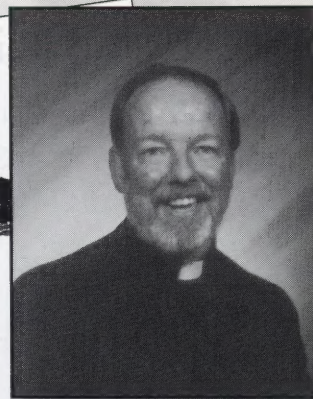
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1950-2000

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Dear People of God,

As Christian Faithful, we are blessed with a long memory of God working among us. With the Church all over the world, we spend this year of Jubilee rejoicing in the full measure of grace we receive in Jesus. Our Catholic Faith shows us we are sharers in Christ's Sonship. In terms of the New Covenant, the 50 years of Saints Philip & James Parish is a small amount of time. Yet because of God's personal love for us, this past half century is a life-giving, specific memory for us. This Golden Anniversary centers us on the specific persons and experiences of grace in this central city neighborhood. How different this place and time would be had not this parish been established and supported over the years.

We stand on the shoulders of our forebears. The heroes and heroines of the heart who shared and shaped the vision, which Father James O'Brien brought here when organizing the parish, endure among us. Associate pastors (John F. Buza, Joseph L. Foster, Francis S. Osborne, Leo F. Carlin, John S. Viall, George P. O'Hara, John M. Garrity, David A. Chojnacki, Martin L. Smith, Joseph P. O'Donnell, Luigi C. Miola, Russell G. Rauscher) added their talents to those formed by the founding pastor. His successor, Father Robert Brennan, carried on the hope and dream that we learn to recognize Christ's Grace around us. Accessory clergy (James A. Viall, Peter Leneghan, John G. Vrana, Alex Demetzky and John McMahon) contributed time and energy to develop the gift. Women Religious from the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago and the Sisters of the Humility of Mary and scores of lay men and women extended the vision through educational apostolate of our day school. Hundreds of men, women and children who called this parish their own expressed the unfolding of covenant grace. God makes us His Own by giving us to each other. Ours is not merely a personal relationship with Jesus but also a communal relationship with the Trinity and the whole Catholic Pilgrim People. This is our Faith. This is the Faith of the Church. We are blessed to profess it in Christ Jesus, Our Lord.

We commit ourselves to live this truth again. This parish is and belongs to all the People of God. We are here not just for the Catholic Faithful, but also for both those who walk on other Christian paths and also those without Christian allegiance. Without a school, our witness today is carried on in works of charity, justice and reconciliation. The witness today is not that of priest and religious but that of all men and women. The Saint Vincent De Paul Society, the Charismatic Prayer Group, Liturgical and Sacramental Ministers, the Alumni and the Hall Hospitality Core express who God is and where grace is working in this, the 21st century. We have a great tradition which inspires and supports us. May our contribution to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit give the Body of Christ a home again as Mary did. With her we ask that All be done to us according to God's Word. Doing so, the Truth is lived again. Everything is Grace.

God Be Good to All,

*J. Brendan McNulty*

Father J. Brendan McNulty



# Saints Philip & James Parish

10812 Adeline Avenue  
Cleveland, Ohio 44111  
(216) 941-6808

Pastor  
Fr. J. Brendan McNulty

## Special Thanks...

To all the parishioners who contributed to this project with their photos and memories. Thanks also to the Archives of the Diocese of Cleveland and The Universe Bulletin for the use of photographs and historical materials.

A note of appreciation, too, to the parishioners and local business owners for their support of this commemorative book. Without your support this publication would not have been possible. When browsing through these pages, take a moment to notice these parishioners and local businesses who gave their support. Please consider their services and mention you saw their listing.

## Publishing Staff

Alumni PRIDE Communications, Ltd.

**Publisher:** Christopher R. Roach

**Writer/Editor:** Jeanne M. Hoban

**Art Director:** Jeffrey Crowther

**Photographer:** William C. Rieter

**Book Production:** Kathleen Kirsch &  
Barbara Roach

The Sts. Philip & James 50th Anniversary Commemorative Book has been published for the parishioners and friends of Sts. Philip & James Parish by Alumni PRIDE Communications, Ltd., Rocky River, Ohio (440) 356-9669, Fax (440) 356-2329. The viewpoints expressed are those of the editor, the writers or their subjects. Sts. Philip & James reserves the right of final approval of what is published. Sts. Philip & James has no explicit or implicit responsibility of performance obligations for advertising, its solicitations or revenue from such solicitations. All Rights Reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced without the written permission of the publisher. Printed by Berea Printing Company, Berea, Ohio.



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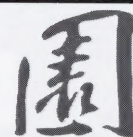
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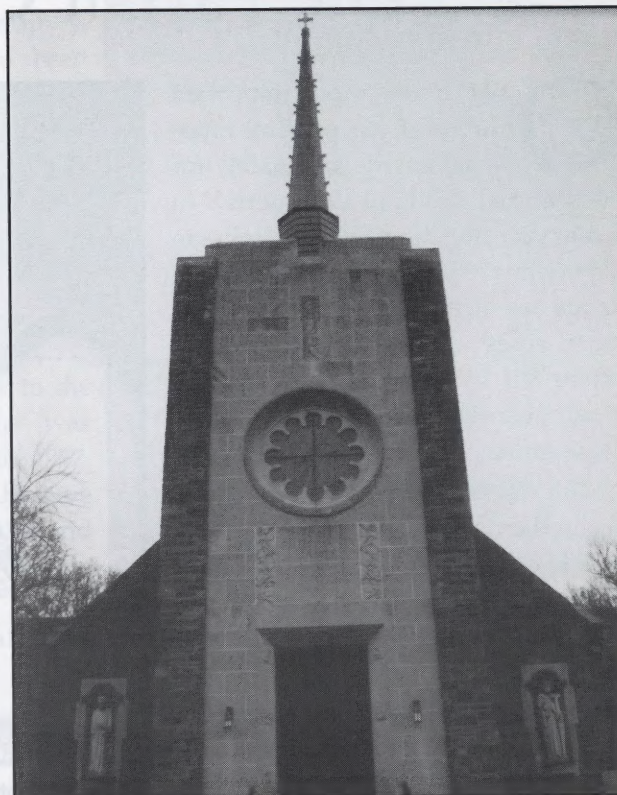
# A Plea for a Parish

**D**uring the years following World War II, Cleveland's west side experienced phenomenal growth. Existing parishes stretched their resources to accommodate the large numbers of Catholic families moving into the area. Most residents of the area surrounding Bosworth Road and Adeline Avenue belonged to St. Ignatius parish, while others attended St. Vincent De Paul and Annunciation parishes.

In a 1946 letter to Bishop Edward F. Hoban, resident Adelaide Stuhldreher wrote, "I have watched your progress with great interest and especially the new parishes you have established, so I want to ask if you would consider a new parish for this spot... We are 1 $\frac{1}{4}$  miles from St. Ignatius and it is all

dangerous travel for children going to school there from this distance, and many send their children to Louis Agassiz School on Bosworth..."

Other residents also expressed their desire for a parish of their own. Rumors continued to circulate for the next few years that a new parish would be built on property the Diocese had purchased in the neighborhood. In 1950, the hopes of area Catholics were realized as the Bishop established Saints Philip and James Parish.



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With these words, Bishop Hoban began the decree establishing the new parish under the patronage of Saints Philip and James. The decree became effective May 1, 1950, the feast day of the saints.

Fr. James H. O'Brien, Diocesan Director of CYO, was named pastor of the fledgling parish. The new congre-



Msgr. Joseph J. Schmit blessed the cornerstone of the new church.

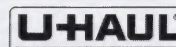
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The five-foot statues of Sts. Philip and James were sculpted in Rome by Joseph C. Motto of East Cleveland.

gation was named in tribute to Fr. O'Brien and his brother, Fr. Philip J. O'Brien, who had been killed in an automobile accident in 1934.

While leading a new parish could be a daunting task, Fr. O'Brien was no stranger to helping organizations make a strong start. The CYO program was new to the Diocese when he was named director in 1937. By the time he became pastor of Sts. Philip and James, the organization included 125+ active

units as well as an annual summer camp.

Although the Diocese owned property in the parish, the school that stood there had been torn down years before. With no parish facility, the first Mass was held for 200 people on a portable altar in the auditorium of Louis Agassiz School on May 6, 1950.

Construction began on the parish school during the summer of 1950 with the cornerstone being laid on



Although work was still being completed, students were admitted to the new school in February 1951.



Mass was held in the school auditorium while the church was still under construction.

September 24. Msgr. Joseph J. Schmit, pastor of St. Clement Parish and Dean of the West Cleveland Deanery, officiated at the ceremony.

Saints Philip and James School opened in February 1951 with 270 students in the first through sixth grades. The students had transferred from three parochial and five public schools. Because of a railroad strike,

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Pastor Fr. James O'Brien places the capstone on the new church.



Usher and Choir party, 1955.



Youth groups have played an important role in the parish since its earliest days.

delivery of windows and desks was delayed. Students used their laps for desks and plastic net-

ting kept out the winter cold.

The Franciscan Sisters of Blessed Kune-gunda were brought in to staff the school, along with three lay teachers. Until a home was found for them in the parish, the Sisters traveled all the way from St. Casimir Parish on the east side.

By the beginning of the 1951-52 school year, the school was completed. Grades seven and eight were added, and the school year opened with 430 students.

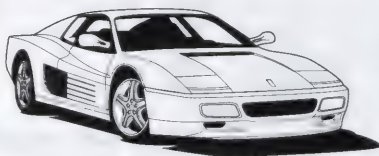
Mass was held in the auditorium of the school, with daily Mass beginning in March 1951. Once the school building was complete, work began on the church building.

The first Mass in the 780-seat church was held on Christmas 1951. The church and school buildings were constructed from Ohio sandstone at a total cost of \$300,000.

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# Establishing Community Spirit

**T**he new church and school were formally dedicated by Bishop Hoban on April 27, 1952. The parish quickly grew to over 1,000. While the congregation expanded, plans were made to expand the parish grounds to include a rectory, convent and other facilities. To fund these efforts, an annual fall festival began on Labor Day weekend of 1952.

Fr. O'Brien alluded to the need for a convent in his notes to the Bishop from a canonical visit in 1953: "Our Sisters are fine. Persevering – conscientious, hard working – most cooperative – excellent teachers – always giving good example, but need some help."

The priests of the parish lived in an existing home on the church grounds, the first of six temporary residences



Fr. O'Brien greets parishioners after Mass.

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until a permanent rectory was built in 1964.

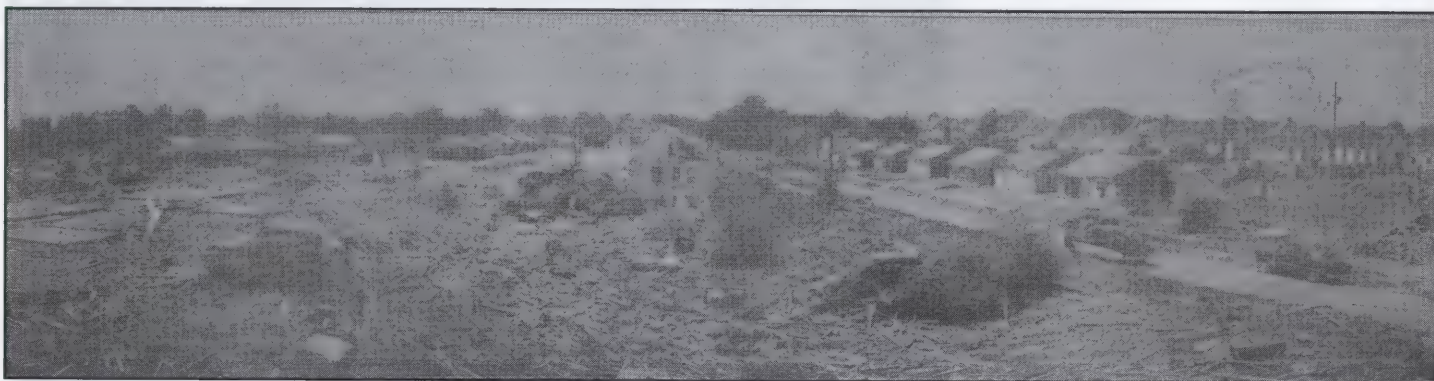
Disaster struck the area in the '50s. A tornado hit the neighborhood in 1953, and for three days, the parish became a Red Cross shelter for victims. The 107th Armory Calvary Regiment established its field headquarters at Sts. Philip and James.

"It is with the deepest sincerity that I wish to commend to you the work and efforts of Father O'Brien and his parish

during those trying days," wrote Walter J. Easton, Colonel Armor, in a letter to the Bishop, "not only for what he did to make our task easier, but also for what he did to help and comfort those afflicted by this disaster. Such demonstra-



The school was built in 1951.



The parish pulled together to help tornado victims in 1953.

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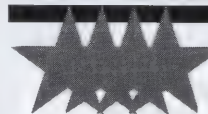
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The parish celebrated Fr. O'Brien's 25th anniversary as a priest on May 30, 1956.



The interior of the church, circa 1950s.

tions of thoughtfulness and consideration for others reflect great credit upon the individuals, the parish, and the Diocese of Cleveland."

Bad luck continued in February 1955, when a robber broke into the parish house and stole more than \$500 cash, which was to be used for the Sisters living expenses.

In spite of these set-backs, the parish remained strong and active. A variety of parish groups sprang up during the '50s. A women's guild, the Altar and Rosary Society, was formed to raise money for altar needs, such as

flowers, cloths and vestments. The group held social events, such as card parties and garden parties to support their efforts.

The school was aided by the formation of a Parent Teacher Union, which sponsored father's night, bake sales, paper sales, fish fries, and other activities to support the school.

A Men's Choir and a Boy's Choir each formed in the early '50s, as did a Parish Choral Club for men and women. Fr. O'Brien assisted the Men's Choir in creating a recording of their repertoire.



Parish groups have played a vital role in the parish since the earliest days — whether for fund-raising, outreach or just having fun.

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Other organizations which found their way into the parish during the first decade included the Holy Name Society, St. Vincent De Paul Society, the Ancient Acolytes, and several youth groups, including Boy Scout Troop 277 and a Campfire Girls unit. Fr. O'Brien's encouragement of athletics was evidenced by the formation of men's and women's bowling leagues, a men's baseball program, and baseball, football, and basketball programs for parish youth.

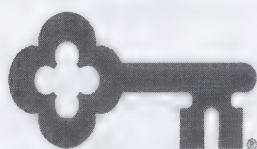


Fr. O'Brien worked with the Men's Choir to produce a record.

## Parish Picnic, 1965



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# Changing with the Times

As the parish entered its second decade, the congregation grew to a high of 1,600 households. Parishioners of all ages remained active in the many organizations which took root in the '50s.

The strength of the congregation was tested in 1963 with a fire in the rectory, a home at 3673 Bosworth. The fire, caused by faulty wiring, resulted in \$20,000 worth of damage. Luckily, fire-fighters were able to save several parish relics as well as a sum of money which had been collected as a farewell gift to associate pastor Fr. Gilbert Sheldon, who had been appointed Diocesan Director of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith and would leave the parish in February 1964.

Following the fire, fund-raising efforts began to build a permanent



The First Communion class of 1961 with Fr. O'Brien.

home for the priests as well as a convent for the Franciscan Sisters. Both buildings were completed in 1964.

During the '60s, the service of parishioners extended well beyond the parish boundaries. A large number of



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The parish embraced liturgical changes implemented after Vatican II.



The parish hall was dedicated as O'Brien Hall in October 1974 in honor of the founding pastor.

congregation members served in the armed forces. They were recognized with an Honor Roll, installed by the Holy Name Society in the vestibule.

While the parish proved its ability to band together during times of struggle, they gathered for good times, as well. In May 1969, a special celebration was planned for the 10th anniversary of associate pastor Fr. John L. Viall's ordination. Two years later, the parish celebrated Fr. O'Brien's 40th year as a priest in May 1971. Appropriately, given the pastor's encouragement of youth athletics, the parish girl's softball team went on to play in the west side championship game that July.

Fr. O'Brien's health began to suffer in 1973. By April, he was no longer



The rectory and convent were built in 1964.

able to attend to the daily administrative duties of the parish and associate pastor Fr. John Garrity was appointed Parish Administrator. Fr. O'Brien retired the following year and was named pastor emeritus July 1, 1974, when Fr. Robert F. Brennan was appointed pastor of Sts. Philip and James. The new pastor joined the parish from St. Wenceslas Parish in Maple Heights.

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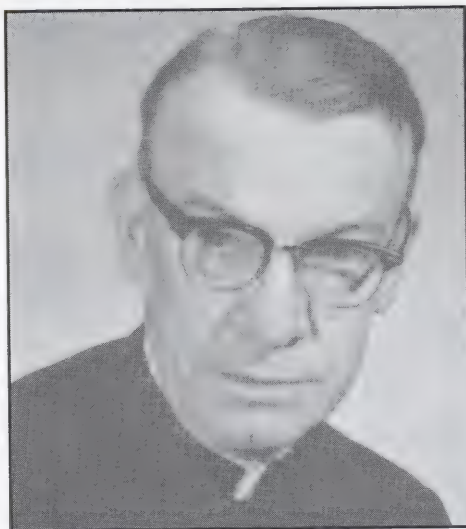
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**Fr. James O'Brien retired as pastor in 1974. He passed away the following year from cancer.**

To honor the founding pastor, the parish hall was dedicated in his name in October 1974. Fr. O'Brien died of cancer a few months later on March 6, 1975.

The parish lost another priest under happier circumstances in 1975, as Fr. David Chojnacki left to pursue a Ph.D. in psychology at the Ohio State University. Fr. Clarence A. Liederbach, a retired priest at St. Augustine Manor, was called in as a temporary replacement until the newly ordained Fr. Martin Smith joined the parish in June. Fr. Smith left the following year to study Systematic Theology in Rome.

The structure of the church had undergone changes to accommodate the new liturgy following Vatican II.



**The school children presented a St. Patrick's Day Program in O'Brien Hall, March 16, 1978.**

As the parish reached its silver anniversary, additional improvements were made to the physical plant. A new garage was added in the mid-'70s, and repairs were made to the church roof and confessionals. A Sanctuary



**Fr. Robert F. Brennan became pastor in 1974.**

Fund was created in 1980 to cover future repair and supply needs of the church. Like many Cleveland parishes, Sts. Philip and James experienced a decline in numbers during the '70s and '80s, as people moved out of the city and into more spacious suburbs. By the late '70s, enrollment in the school had dipped below 400 students. With their own numbers dwindling, the Franciscan Sisters left the school in 1981, and were replaced by the Sisters of the Humility of Mary, who had assisted the Franciscan nuns in the years preceding.

Although the parish was smaller, remaining parishioners continued to take an active role in their faith life. A 1978 pilgrimage to the Sorrowful Mother Shrine in Bellevue drew 40 participants. The pilgrimage, sponsored by the St. Vincent De Paul Society was the third trip sponsored for the parish Golden Agers in as many years.

Parish carnivals remained popular draws during the '70s and '80s, as well.



In June 1990, the parish celebrated its 40th anniversary with a special Mass and other activities. Two years later, Sts. Philip and James welcomed its third pastor as Fr. J. Brendan McNulty was installed on February 1, 1992.

During his tenure as pastor, Fr. McNulty has been faced with the challenge of finding new uses for parish facilities. The Sisters of the Humility of Mary left the school in July 1995, leaving the convent vacant. With enrollment continuing to drop, the school itself closed in June 1998.

In keeping with the outreach mission of the church, the convent was leased to a group seeking to convert it into a maternity home for girls in need



**Teams from Sts. Philip and James parish were perennial contenders in city-wide championships.**



**The Franciscan Sisters of Blessed Kunegunda taught at the parish school until 1981.**



of a safe haven. In 1999, renovation began on the school to house the Horizon Science Academy for seventh,

eighth and ninth grade students.

With these developments, Sts. Philip and James Church continues its tradi-

tion of service to the surrounding community as the parish celebrates its 50th anniversary.



"Fish pond" at the 1981 carnival. The giggling operator is Patty Gibbons.



School children buried a time capsule in 1987 to be opened in the year 2000.

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Fr. James O'Brien, pastor 1950-1974  
 Fr. James P. McDonough, in-residence 1950-1951  
 Fr. John E. Buza 1951-1956  
 Fr. Joseph L. Foster 1956-1961  
 Fr. Francis L. Osborne 1961-1964  
 Fr. Leo Carlin 1962-1963  
 Fr. Gilbert I. Sheldon 1963-1964  
 Fr. John L. Viall 1964-1972  
 George P. O'Hara 1963-1964  
 Fr. Gordon J. Horst 1964  
 Fr. James A. Viall, in-residence 1965-1973  
 Fr. Peter Leneghan 1968-1970  
 Fr. John M. Garrity 1970-1974  
 Fr. David A. Chojnacki 1973-1975

Fr. Robert F. Brennan, pastor 1974-1992  
 Fr. Martin L. Smith 1975-1976  
 Fr. Joseph Lash, pro-tem 1976  
 Fr. Joseph P. O'Donnell 1976  
 Fr. Joseph Bacevice 1980  
 Msgr. Thomas J. Kelly, in residence 1981

Fr. J. Brendan McNulty, pastor 1992-present  
 Fr. Luigi C. Miola 1981-1986  
 Fr. Russell G. Rauscher 1986-1989  
 Fr. John McMahon, in residence 1993-1998  
 Fr. William Severt, in residence 2000

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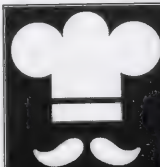


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